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ABSTRACT

The use of computer assisted programs in career exploration and occupational information is well documented. Various phases of the vocational counseling process, i.e., diagnostic evaluation, program planning, career exploration, case management, and program evaluation, offer similarly promising opportunities for computerization. Using the Massachusetts General Hospital Multiprogramming System (MUMPS) File Manager system, the Loma Linda, California Veterans Administration Hospital Rehabilitation Psychology Department developed a system which adapted the uniqueness of the file manager system with the development of branching logic necessary in designing vocational rehabilitation interviews, questionniares, and client treatment plans. Using this system the counselor is able to select specific information, from predetermined sets of information, to match the client's unique situation and characteristics with available services and programs. The Loma Linda staff has further developed a psychodiagnostic assessment system to accomodate graphics software, multiple norms, and timed tests, and a case management program which allows for monitoring of the client's progress. (A copy of the vocational counseling interview and the vocational rehabilitation plan are attached.) (BL)

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The Development of MUMPS-Based Rehabilitation Psychology Computer Applications

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Development of MUMPS-Based

Rehabilitation Psychology Computer Applications

Rather than describing a broad range of possible MUMPS computer programming applications in rehabilitation psychology, this paper will describe current computer projects in the specialty of occupational and vocational psychology. This is where the speaker's efforts have been focused, and it is an important, sometimes neglected component of rehabilitation psychology. Vocationally oriented psychology is, in my opinion, inherently tied in to a full concept of rehabilitation psychology. It is also one of the most attractive components of rehabilitation psychology for computerization.

Vocation, the concept of work or occupation, should be a key component of any rehabilitation psychology program. A recent article in Hospital and Community Psychiatry by Hagen (1983) summarized recent research linking job loss to physical and mental illness. Hagen quotes Freud: "work is man's strongest tie to reality." The research cited by Hagen is derived from studies of potentially employed persons in the general population. How much more profound, then, are the problems of occupational stress, devaluation, and hopelessness of disabled persons, involuntarily denied access to employment through either the effects of impairment or the attitudes of others.

Scope and Definitions

Vocational counseling has been studied extensively as a professional process. The process of counseling proceeds from client referral through a number of possible phases, which include:

1. Diagnostic study , the collection and evaluation of data concerning the health, psychological, sociocultural, vocational, and educational characteristicsof the client;

2. Extended evaluation, using rehabilitation workshops or work evaluation units;

3. Individualized rehabilitation planning, a formalized, written cooperative effort between counselor and client, specifying specific, obtainable rehabilitation goals;

4. Vocational counseling, including career exploration and the presentation of occupational and educational information and guidance;

5. The delivery of services, either directly through VA resources or community agencies, including training, health care, psychological intervention, or other corrective/rehabilitative services;

6. Placement, either into employment or meaningful, productive avocational or recreational activity, using either a skill building, instructional approach, or through direct counselor job development in the community;

7. Postemployment services, which always includes follow up,

and could include job maintenance activities or case management services.

Suggested Computer Applications in the Vocational Counseling Process

The following vocational counseling activities seem to offer the most promising opportunities for automation:

1. The diagnostic and evaluation process, including history taking, interviewing, vocational or psychological assessment, and work evaluation;

2. Rehabilitation planning, considering it is such a formalized planning process including, as previously mentioned, clear problem statements, results of the diagnostic process, specific services planned to achieve rehabilitation, with a time frame for each, and a method for evaluating success;

3. Career exploration, including the review of occupational information, employment outlook, occupational preferences , and sources for jobs or training;

4. Case management systems, including scheduling, client status, case load management, and follow up coordination;

5. Community resource development and cooperation, involving resource directories and shared computer capabilities between vocational rehabilitation and manpower agencies;

6. Program evaluation, research, and cost effectiveness systems generated from a standardized computerized data base;

7. Computer assisted instructional techniques in job

seeking, job survival, and other skill development programs in vocational counseling.

Current Developments in the Computerization of Vocational Counseling

Vocational counseling professionals have been active in developing computer programs in a number of areas relevant to counseling psychology in rehabilitation settings. They tend to be oriented toward school settings, either secondary or college level. The available programs use either microcomputers with software in BASIC or timesharing from centrally located main-frame computers.

The preponderance of available software in vocational counseling addresses the issues of career exploration and occupational information. These programs are often referred to as computer assisted guidance systems. Examples of the best known include Career Information System (CIS) from the University of Oregon, Computerized Heuristic Occpational Information and Career Exploration System (CHOICES), and Coordinated Occupational Information Network (COIN).

These systems basically provide a prepared journey through the world of work for users, sorting and branching to specific and ever more specific occupational information as the user responds to exploratory inquiries. A program entitled EUREKA, heavily used in California, provides the user with information on schools, courses of study, costs and admission requirements, or, for the

immedate job seeker, instruction in job finding skills.

Another direction being developed is to use the computer to provide direct job placement information, usually consisting of job or employer data banks. As an example, the University of California, Riverside, recently developed an employer data bank for persons with disabilities. Over 1400 employers were interviewed to provide a data base that would assist disabled persons in planning their job search. Of course, most state departments of employment provide some sort of job bank that is often computerized and available to dial-up users.

The Regional Occupational Programs of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in Southern California have just completed an employer data bank file in which every significant employer in the two county area is listed, with access available to counselors through such fields as types of occupations hired for the business, average turnover, salary information, and other critical information for the job seeker.

VOCOMP is a batch process system in use in Southern California, designed specifically for vocational rehabilitation counseling with disabled persons. It brings together labor market information and training opportunities with information about functional limitations, work histories, vocational interests, and other characteristics of disabled workers. The aim is to provide a framework for a comprehensive, individualized rehabilitation plan for the counselor and client.

All of these various programs have applications in the VA or

any other health care system, but they have certain limitations too. Content must be carefully analyzed, since the majority are written for a secondary student population. Cost becomes a critical variable, since most are quite expensive. The software is not truly interactive and is written in BASIC. Finally,lacking on-line, interactive capabilities, the extant software in vocationally oriented psychology fails to address key issues inherent in a health care setting, such as patient scheduling, interviewing, vocational assessment, documentation of treatment, patient planning, and individual case management. Also, the complexities of weaving a vocational rehabilitation plan into an ongoing health care plan within the sometimes complicated, often hectic world of the medical center are not addressed in the currently available vocational software.

Computerized Counseling Psychology Applications in the VA

Beginning in the mid-1970's, a group of VA Department of Medicine and Surgery mental health professionals began to apply the ANSI Standard Language MUMPS to the challenges of developing a computerized mental health system.

MUMPS is an acronym for the Massachusetts General Hospital Multi-Prpgramming System, a high-level interpretive programming and data-management system. It is a language expressly designed for minicomputer technology, used in an environment which requires a large, shared, rapidly changing data base primarily involving

textual data. Development of MUMPS began at Massachusetts General Hospital in 1966. The goal in developing MUMPS was to provide a simple, powerful high level language for a health care information system. For more detailed information the article by Munnecke (1977) may be reviewed.

Initial work resulted in such products as an automated psychological assessment package and a comprehensive psychiatric triage system. As the Mental Health Users Group enlarged, more and more applications developed, taking advantage of the unique capabilities of MUMPS for interactive, on-line computer programming in a health care setting.

Because of the VA's commitments to rehabilitation oriented counseling psychology within psychology service, this program became the focus for some of this computer development.

Using the MUMPS-based hardware and software systems then being introduced into the VA system, initial projects in vocational counseling resulted in a computerized system of vocational assessment, vocational interviewing, rehabilitation planning, community resource management, and individual client case management. Some tentative planning was completed in the area of career exploration too, but with the profusion of systems available from community resources, separate development of a VA system seemed redundant for the present.

Initially, the well known "File Manager" system in MUMPS was used at the Loma Linda VA Hospital in an attempt to design a flexible, functional vocational interview/history/rehabilitation

plan.

The File Manager is a package of on-line computer routines for interactive use in a health care setting. It provides the MUMPS system user with a fast, easy method for establishing sets of computer files. The nonprogramming professional user is allowed to define the parameters for files as diverse as "patients on ward 3SW" or "Current Counseling Status." The File Manager offers the capability to: create new files, create new attributes for existing files, create cross-referencing for file attributes, enter or delete file attribute data at any time, display file attributes, and search files for specified attributes. While useful files for rehabilitation psychology were created with the File Manager program, the demands of the more complex interactive tasks involved in rehabilitation planning were beyond its capabilities. It was found to present insurmountable problems in that the heirarchical nature of the information and the structure desired were not achievable in the File Manager format.

As a result, a program was developed that combined the unique capability of the File Manager to allow a nonprogrammer to develop files of information with the necessary power to allow development of branching logic often necessary in designing interviews, questionnaires, and patient treatment plans. The handout contains a sample of the initial version of the vocational interview. It should be stressed that the content of the interview is easily changed by the using psychologist, so that local conditions can be addressed. Further, the printed format is

easily modified by a nonprogrammer. Through the use of prompted frames, with predetermined sets of information appearing for the client and/or counselor to select from, the interview provides a uniquely standardized collection of data. The format allows volunteers or paraprofessionals to easily complete thorough vocational histories.

Using this same programming approach, the speaker was able to construct an automated Written Vocational Rehabilitation Plan, using branching logic to define and print an individualized, documented plan for vocational counseling and rehabilitation. A sample of a completed plan is attached.

In a further development, the Loma Linda staff have extended the capabilities of the Psychodiagnostic Assessment System to accomodate graphics softwear, multiple norms, and timed tests. Instruments such as the School and College Ability Tests, the Technical and Scholastic Test, and the College Qualifications Test are being evaluated for use on the computer.

A case management program, which interacts with the MUMPS hospital Admissions, Discharge, Transfer,and Scheduling package was developed to allow the counseling psychologist to monitor each client's progress, by maintaining current data on case status, assigned counselor, and information on hospital treatment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

For those of us involved in rehabilitation psychology

programs within health care institutions, a key indicator of successful intervention by the total health care team is occupational status, whether the objective is competitive employment, training, work evaluation, or avocational activity.

MUMPS based computer applications can contribute significantly to the efficient operation of a busy hospital vocational rehabilitation psychology program. There are some caveats, however. First, computer applications have a powerful ability to stir up fear, resistance, and sometimes political mayhem in an institutional environment. What may seem at first glance to be a straightforward issue of increased efficiency and cost effectiveness can easily turn into a nightmare of competing needs for power and control, especially in large bureaucracies where certain departments may have a vested interest in the control of data processing.

At the operational level, staff, especially volunteer or other paraprofessional personnel, may react with substantial aversion to an approach that involves such threatening hardware, so many "beeps", clicks, and such bizarre terminology.

While this may be a labor of the obvious, this speaker's experience is that the actual technical and professional development of computer approaches in vocationally oriented rehabilitation psychology is much like the tip of the hackneyed iceberg. Programming an! softwear development seem to be the easiest hurdles to an effective ADP program.

References

Hagen, D.Q. "The relationship between job loss and physical and mental illness. Hospital and Community Psychiatry, 34, 438-441.

Munnecke, T.H., Walters, R.F., Bowie, J., Lazarus, C.B., and Blidger, D.A. MUMPS: Characteristics and comparison with other programming systems. Medical Informatics, 2, 173-196.

VOCATIONAL COUNSELING INTERVIEW

NAME: DOE,JOHN SEX: MALE DOB: OCT 5, 1943 RACE: CAUCASIAN
SSN: 570584702 STREET ADDRESS: 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE CITY: SAN BERNARDINO
STATE: CALIFORNIA ZIP CODE: 97878 PHONE: (714)877-6778
EMERGENCY CONTACT: FELIX DOE E-RELATIONSHIP: FATHER
E-STREET ADDRESS: 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE E-CITY: SAN BERNARDINO E-STATE: CALIFORNIA
E-ZIP: 97878 E-PHONE: 877-6778
STREET ADDRESS (PERM. MAILING): 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE CITY (PERM. MAILING): SAN BERNARDINO
STATE (PERM. MAILING): CALIFORNIA ZIP (PERM. MAILING): 97878

DATE OF INTERVIEW: AUG 3,1983

VA FILE (C) NUMBER: C 22357789

SEPARATED, 4 MARRIAGE(S)
DEPENDENTS: CHILDREN (AGED 12, 16, 18)
CURRENT RESIDENCE: SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE, RESIDENCY STATUS: NONPAYING GUEST
OTHER PERSONS SHARING RESIDENCE: PARENT(S)

AVAILABLE TRANSPORTATION: PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
CLIENT DOES NOT HAVE A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE
REASON FOR LOSS OR SUSPENSION: MULTIPLE DWI (DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED)
DATE ELIGIBLE FOR REINSTATEMENT: MAY 29,1984

LEGAL PROBLEMS RELEVANT TO EMPLOYMENT OR BONDING:
MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION (DRUNK DRIVING)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

SERVICE-CONNECTED, CURRENT RATING: 30% - CONDITION: ANXIETY (CHRONIC), BACK INJURY/SURGERY (S/P FUSION, L-3)
RATING AWARDED MAR 5,1965 - LAST CHANGED MAR 5,1965

SOURCES(S) OF INCOME:
VA SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY COMPENSATION, MONTHLY AMOUNT: $173
FOOD STAMPS, MONTHLY AMOUNT: $50
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME: $223

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE APPLIED FOR:
STATE DISABILITY INSURANCE

CURRENT ASSETS:
NONE

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS:

AUTOMOBILE LOANS, BALANCE OF DEBT: $900 - MONTHLY PAYMENT: $90 - NAME OF CREDITOR: FASTBUCK FINANCE

ALIMONY OR CHILD SUPPORT, MONTHLY PAYMENT: $150

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION COMPLETED: SECONDARY, 12 YEARS - SECONDARY CURRICULUM: GENERAL
CLIENT HAS COMPLETED A SECONDARY DIPLOMA

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION/TRAINING:

VOCATIONAL COUNSELING INTERVIEW

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION (CONT.)

COMMUNITY COLLEGE, COLLEGE, OR UNIVERSITY
VALLEY COLLEGE
SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA
VOCATIONAL OBJECTIVE: ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN
DATE BEGAN: SEP 1967 - DATE ENDED: JUN 1969
DEGREE: ASSOCIATES DEGREE
TRAINING SPONSORED BY: VA CH. 34 GI BILL, DURATION OF PROGRAM 18 MONTHS - PROGRESS: SATISFACTORY - ENTITLEMENT USED 18 MONTHS - SEMESTER HOURS EARNED: 60
ESTIMATED COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY GRADE POINT AVERAGE: 1.9
MAJOR: ELECTRONICS

FLUENT FOREIGN LANGUAGES: NONE

AVOCATIONAL INFORMATION

SPARE TIME ACTIVITIES:
WATCH TV, LISTEN TO RADIO, OR RECORDS
VISIT NIGHT CLUBS OR TAVERNS
THINKING/DAY DREAMING
SPORTS, WATCH, FOOTBALL, BASEBALL
SURVIVAL GAME

SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND CHURCH ACTIVITIES:
CLUB OR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS, POSSE COMITATUS, NRA - OFFICES OR POSITIONS HELD: ARMORER

WORK HISTORY

BRANCH OF SERVICE: MARINE CORPS
DATE BEGAN ACTIVE DUTY: JUN 1962 - DATE ENDED ACTIVE DUTY: JUN 1966
PRINCIPLE MILITARY DUTIES: INFANTRY
HIGHEST RANK HELD: ENLISTED RANK, GRADE: E-3
RANK WHEN DISCHARGED/RELEASED FROM ACTIVE DUTY: ENLISTED, GRADE: E-1
TYPE OF DISCHARGE: MEDICAL

JOB TITLE:

ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN
EMPLOYER: DATAMATION
SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA
DUTIES: SOLDERED CIRCUIT BOARDS
DATE BEGAN: JAN 1970 - DATE ENDED: JUN 1979
AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK: 45
MONTHLY NET PAY: $1,000
QUALITIES OF JOB LIKED: OPPORTUNITY TO USE ABILITY, LIKED COMPANY POLICIES AND PRACTICES, GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS
ASPECTS OF JOB DISLIKED: LOW OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE, PAY AND FRINGE BENEFITS TOO LOW
REASON FOR LEAVING JOB: INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION, FIRED DUE TO ALCOHOLISM

ELECTRONICS REPAIRMAN
EMPLOYER: CONSUMER ELECTRONICS
SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA
DUTIES: REPAIRED ELECTRONIC APPLIANCES

VOCATIONAL COUNSELING INTERVIEW

WORK HISTORY (CONT.)

DATE BEGAN: JUN 1979 - DATE ENDED: MAY 1981
AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK: 40
MONTHLY NET PAY: $950
QUALITIES OF JOB LIKED: NONE
ASPECTS OF JOB DISLIKED: DISLIKED COMPANY POLICIES AND PRACTICES, PAY AND FRINGE BENEFITS TOO LOW
REASON FOR LEAVING JOB: LAYED OFF

TV REPAIRMAN
EMPLOYER: AL'S DISCOUNT TV
SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA
DUTIES: REPAIRED TV'S
DATE BEGAN: AUG 1981 - DATE ENDED: MAR 1982
AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK: 30
MONTHLY NET PAY: $500
QUALITIES OF JOB LIKED: NONE
ASPECTS OF JOB DISLIKED: PAY AND FRINGE BENEFITS TOO LOW
REASON FOR LEAVING JOB: INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION, DRINKING

JOB(S) LIKED MOST: ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN

JOB(S) LIKED LEAST: TV REPAIR

DISABILITY INFORMATION

NON-SERVICE CONNECTED PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENTS: ALCOHOL RELATED PROBLEMS

LIMITATION IN STANDING: MINIMAL
LIMITATION IN WALKING: MINIMAL
LIMITATION IN STOOPING AND KNEELING: MODERATE
LIMITATION IN CLIMBING AND BALANCING: MINIMAL
LIMITATION IN REACHING: NONE
LIMITATION IN WORKING WITH HANDS: NONE
LIMITATION IN HEARING: NONE
LIMITATION IN SEEING: NONE
LIMITATION IN SPEAKING: NONE
LIMITATION IN CROUCHING AND CRAWLING: MODERATE
LIMITATION IN STRENGTH: NONE
LIMITATION IN ENDURANCE: MINIMAL

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN

NAME: DOE,JOHN SEX: MALE DOB: OCT 5, 1943 RACE: CAUCASIAN
SSN: 570584702 STREET ADDRESS: 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE CITY: SAN BERNARDINO
STATE: CALIFORNIA ZIP CODE: 97878 PHONE: (714)877-6778
EMERGENCY CONTACT: FELIX DOE E-RELATIONSHIP: FATHER
E-STREET ADDRESS: 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE E-CITY: SAN BERNARDINO E-STATE: CALIFORNIA
E-ZIP: 97878 E-PHONE: 877-6778
STREET ADDRESS (PERM. MAILING): 410 MUDVIEW DRIVE CITY (PERM. MAILING): SAN BERNARDINO
STATE (PERM. MAILING): CALIFORNIA ZIP (PERM. MAILING): 97878

DATE: AUG 3,1983

OCCUPATIONAL GOAL: ALCOHOLISM COUNSELOR

PATIENT STRENGTHS FOR REHABILITATION:
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION ELIGIBILITY
POSITIVE MOTIVATION OR ATTITUDE
DESCRIPTION: ACTIVE IN LONG-TERM ALCOHOLISM RECOVERY GROUP

PATIENT PROBLEMS FOR REHABILITATION:

DISABILITY (MEDICAL, DENTAL, PSYCHIATRIC)
DESCRIPTION: HISTORY OF ANXIETY REACTION IN VOCATIONAL SETTINGS
EXPECTED DURATION OF PROBLEM: 6 MONTHS TO 2 YEARS
EXTENT OF RESULTING HANDICAP: SERIOUS

SOCIAL/FAMILIAL/CULTURAL
DESCRIPTION: ABUSED CHILD, NOW LIVING WITH PARENTS
EXPECTED DURATION OF PROBLEM: UNDER 3 MONTHS

FINANCIAL
DESCRIPTION: UNEMPLOYED FOR OVER ONE YEAR
EXPECTED DURATION OF PROBLEM: 3-6 MONTHS

INELIGIBLE FOR VA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
DESCRIPTION: BTD EXPIRED

OTHER PROBLEM
DESCRIPTION: VOCATIONAL OBJECTIVE LIKELY A RESULT OF IDENTIFICATION WITH TREATMENT STAFF
EXPECTED DURATION OF PROBLEM: 3-6 MONTHS

REHABILITATION SERVICE OBJECTIVES:

VOCATIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
PROJECTED BEGINNING DATE: AUG 3,1983
PROVIDER: VAH
ESTIMATED LENGTH OF SERVICE: 1 MONTHS.
PLANNED OUTCOME: CLARIFY INTERESTS, VALUES, PERSONALITY FACTORS IN VOCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

COUNSELING/OCCUPATIONAL EXPLORATION
PROJECTED BEGINNING DATE: SEP 2,1983
PROVIDER: VAH
ESTIMATED LENGTH OF SERVICE: 2 MONTHS.
PLANNED OUTCOME: PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT REALISTIC CAREER OPTIONS

REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY RESOURCE

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN

PROJECTED BEGINNING DATE: AUG 3,1983
PROVIDER: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
ESTIMATED LENGTH OF SERVICE: 18 MONTHS.
PLANNED OUTCOME: VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND PLACEMENT

PATIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

REPORT FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCE APPOINTMENT
PROVIDER: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

ATTEND CAREER CENTER COUNSELING OR PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES

PATIENT'S RESPONSE:
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT DISCUSSED WITH PATIENT, AND CONSENT OBTAINED.
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN REVIEWED WITH THE PATIENT, AND PATIENT AGREES, WITH EXCEPTIONS
EXCEPTION TO PLAN: PATIENT INDICATES FIRM PLAN TO TRAIN AS ALCOHOLISM COUNSELOR

SIGNATURE_____